

American Opinion Summary

Department of State

Permanent file copy
Do not remove

No. 51

December 1, 1963

S.P.A.

Early reaction to the Administration's statement of the "case" for its Cuban policy finds no significant public support. Substantial disagreement concerning the "thrust" used by Russian weapons and troops on the island.

Some declare that the Middle Ground and "moderate" opposition "case" through the Defense Department's "unprecedented" public briefing and the President's comments on the May 1st, constitute "a persuasive case for the attorney to sue into 'advice'" and "a good case, too, for our present diplomatic" (the Baltimore Sun asserts). With the Washington Post and Washington Star, the Sun sees Administration critics now "required to toe up to" the questions "they have been voicing. What would they do? Will they invade Cuba?"

Even some radical forces insist the Administration's opinion must be respected" on intervention. The Philadelphia Inquirer, in absence of any threatening arms build up, "We can accept Secretary Ullman's evaluation as factual," says the Philadelphia Inquirer, for "there is nothing to show him wrong in the exaggerated and irresponsible claims made by some politically motivated critics" (somewhat similarly, Scripps Howard's Washington Star).

"However, the Administration's defense of its policy in Cuba cannot erase" certain "blaring facts," opponents maintain. Cuba is an armed Soviet base, and so long as one remains so, "our security and that of our neighbors in Latin America will be seriously endangered," the Philadelphia Inquirer states. Scripps-Howard stresses "the lack of assurance regarding which remains disturbing"; furthermore, it holds that the "uncertainty of the nature of the weapons in Cuba "has been vastly over emphasized" by the Administration (also, Sen. Revering in UPI).

The Wall Street Journal article that "the most unreassuring thing about the whole business" is the "undenied fact" that sizeable Soviet forces and modern weapons do remain in Cuba.

"Lack of any appearance of U.S. sufficiency" is protested by some. "There are other measures available to us, short of invasion," such as "a tight naval blockade" and "pressure on Khrushchev" to recall his troops, reveres Sen. John F. Dulles, Phil. Inquirer; Sen. Symington (U.S. No. 1).